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A
S E R M O N

Preach'd in the

Cathedral Church

O F

St. PETER, in EXON,

Before the Rt. WORSHIPFUL the

MAYOR and CHAMBER,

On AUGUST the 6th, 1725.

Being the ANNIVERSARY of
the DELIVERANCE of that City
from the Cornish INSURRECTION, in
the Reign of King EDWARD VI.

By JOHN FISHER, M. A.

VICAR of St. V'Uryan in Cornwall.

Publish'd at the Request of the MAYOR.

EXON, ⊕

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To the Right Worshipful
Humphry Bawden, Esq;

MAYOR
OF THE
CITY of EXON.

SIR!



*HIS Discourse, made
publick at your Re-
quest, waits upon you
for your Protection;
hoping you will be pleas'd to par-
don its Imperfections, and receive*

it with the same Candour and Goodness with which you heard it. I am indeed the more easily inclin'd to expect from you all imaginable Clemency, because I am sensible you generously afford it to All; and you can't possibly do otherwise, without offering Violence to your Nature.

I should think myself obliged to enlarge upon those good Qualities you are possess'd of, that render you so agreeable to all who know you, were it not for fear of offending you, by relating what every one thinks to be true but yourself. And I should think it unpardonable, at this Juncture, not to mention, in what a just and impartial, as well as generous and handsome, manner,

manner, you have discharg'd the Office of a CHIEF-MAGISTRATE, to the Satisfaction of all, who are so happy as to live under the Influence of your Authority, but that every one has anticipated me in all that can be said on that Subject.

I shall therefore make no farther Use of this Opportunity, than publicly to acknowledge the Obligations I lie under to Yourself in particular, and to your Worshipful Brethren the ALDERMEN and COMMON COUNCIL in general, for the many Favours you have been pleas'd to confer upon me: To pray for the Prosperity of this City; and that you may long continue to be an Ornament to it, as you are at present,

sent, not only by a just and equitable Execution of your Office, but likewise by promoting the Publick Interest of it ; and that Success may attend all your Endeavours, together with all imaginable Happiness here and hereafter, is the hearty Prayer of,

S I R,

Your most obliged

)
humble Servant,

John Fisher.



PSA. CXXvii. pt. ver¹. I.

*-Except the Lord keep the City,
the Watchman waketh but
in vain.*



O expect Protection from an *Arm of Flesh*, and Success to our Endeavours from our own Sufficiency, is a Thing altogether as ridiculous as it is sinful. 'Tis to deny ourselves to be what we are, to shut our Eyes upon Providence, and to wrap ourselves up in our own Infirmities. For no one, but He, who called us into Being, can preserve us in it; nor is any Power, less than that, which *laid the Foundations of the Earth*, and *stretched out the Heavens like a Curtain*, sufficient to supply our Wants, and to govern the doubtful and uncertain Affairs of Life.

We

We may summon up all our Care and Industry, Diligence and Discretion, as indeed it is just and reasonable for us so to do: We may tire ourselves with Disquietudes, and wear out the Day with a constant Round of Toil and Labour, 'till the Circle returns: We may *rise up early, and*
Pf. cxxvii. so late take Rest, and eat the Bread of Care-
2. fulness: And yet, unless the Lord prospers our Undertakings, and gives a Blessing to our Designs, whatever we do will be vain and fruitless; and will produce nothing in the End but unwelcome Troubles and Disappointments.

The Success of all Things depends upon the Assistance of God, whether they be of greater or lesser Importance, whether they be Things belonging to private Persons or
ver. i. publick Societies: For, *Except the Lord build the House, their Labour is but lost that build it;* and, *except the Lord keep the City, the Watchman waketh but in vain.*

In discoursing on the Words of the Text, I shall endeavour to shew,

I. That there is a DIVINE PROVIDENCE, that disposes and governs all Things.

II. That

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II. That without the Assistance of this Divine PROVIDENCE, whatever we take in Hand will turn to no Account.

III. That this does not exclude Human Care and Industry, but only as consider'd simply by itself, without the Concurrence of God's Blessing.

IV. I shall draw some Inferences from the Whole, suitable to the present Occasion, and so conclude.

I. Then I am to shew, that there is a Divine Providence that disposes and governs all Things. And this is so plain and obvious, that to endeavour to prove an overruling Providence, at a Time when the very Occasion of our assembling ourselves together is a remarkable Instance of it, would be to trespass upon your Patience, was it not that the Subject I am upon does naturally require it: I shall therefore prove it thus:

There is a Divine Providence, for the very same Reason that there is a GOD; and the same Arguments that are made use of to prove the one, are of equal Strength to prove the other. — For if the Beauty
and

Beauty and Harmony of the Universe, and the wonderful Variety and Contrivance of all its Parts, together with their agreeable Connexion with the Whole, do require an infinitely Wise and Powerful Being for their Cause and Author, they will likewise require such a Being for their Preservation: The same Degree of Power and Wisdom being as necessary to preserve a Thing, as to bring it first into Being. Now, there is no Part of the Creation but what is a forcible Argument of a God that made it, and consequently of a Divine Providence, in that it continues to exist. For they are so intimately connected, that it is impossible to separate them, without taking away that which is of Necessity required to the Being of a GOD. And therefore Tully says of *Epicurus*, who acknowledged that there *was a God*, but deny'd his *Providence*, *that *he acknowledged it in Words, but in Reality denied it.*

But besides; The Government of the World in such a wonderful and surprising manner; the bringing Order out of Confusion, and Good out of Evil; the disposing all Events; the setting up and pulling down Kingdoms; the causing Peace and Tranquility to arise from

* *Epicurum Verbis reliquisse Deos, Res sustinisse. Cicero Nat. Deor. l. 2*

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from the Distractions of States and Commonwealths, and from the Tumults and Disorders that must necessarily happen upon such Occasions, are strong Arguments of a Divine Providence, that disposes and governs all Things.

When we see a Person of low Degree rise into a *Moses* or a *Josbna*, and the deep-laid Stratagems of Great Men blasted and overturned: When a Good Man is, for a while, almost lost in the thick Darkness of Adversity; and then of a sudden (by Means beyond the Reach of Human Probability) every Thing brightens upon him; and he appears again, *like the Sun, when he goeth forth in his Might*:

When Great Things are accomplish'd by weak Instruments; as when *Jael* smites a *Sisera*: or when Great Exploits are perform'd by no visible Means at all; as when *the*^{2 Kings} *Angel of the Lord went out, and smote, in the*^{19. 55.} *Camp of the Assyrians, an Hundred Fourscore and Five Thousand; and when they arose early in the Morning, behold, they were all dead Corpses*:

When we see some odd unaccountable Accidents, that have no manner of Dependence upon each other, tend to the same Thing, and produce the same Effect, as if there was an intimate Connection between them from the Beginning; as, that the En-

vy of *Joseph's* Brethren (which was the Occasion of his being sold into *Egypt*, and afterwards of his living with *Pharaoh's* Officer, which by another Accident was the Occasion of his being cast into Prison) should be the Foundation of all his future Glory :

When we see Men of different Tempers and Inclinations, as the Valiant, the Fearful, the Liberal, the Covetous, and many others, (which, at first Sight, one would think dispos'd to molest and destroy each other) when we see these joyn'd together in Society ; this Contrariety of Humours serving to cement and unite them the closer together, which Union could not possibly be preserv'd, if they all aim'd at the same Thing :

When we see the mutual Dependance we have upon each other ; so that no one is able to provide for himself, without the Assistance of his Fellow-Creatures : The Rich can't live without the Poor, nor the Poor without the Rich ; nor People of equal Circumstances, as to Wealth, though of different Employments, without the Assistance of one another. Thus, by the Benefit and Advantage of Trade, our Wants are supply'd, and Good-nature and Friendship are at the same Time maintain'd and kept alive ; otherwise there would be nothing but continual Quarrels and Contentions, and an universal

verfal Contempt amongst the whole Human Race :

When we fee Cities and Countries in an extraordinary manner protected from imminent Dangers ; as was the Cafe of this City in particular ; when *the Sword was with-^{Exek. 7.} out, and Famine within,* then God was plea-^{15.}fed to preserve us from both ; which Bleffing we are now met together to commemorate. — When we fee all thefe Things, fhall we doubt whether the Finger of God is in all this ?

And if we were to look into the inferior Part of the Creation, we fhall find all Things govern'd by certain Laws : Every Thing tends to fome determinate End, and is endued with fuitable Powers and Abilities to attain it ; which can't be the Effect of Chance or Cafualty, but of an All-wife Being : For * Chance is repugnant to every Thing regular ; and if the World was governed by that (not to mention the Contradi-
ction there is in the very Terms) what could we expect, but fuch a difmal Hurry and Confufion, as muft always follow from the Want of Order and Government ? Where-
as now we fee Things go fmoothly on : Effects flow from their proper Caufes ; and all according to certain Rules, that the Almighty Creatour has been pleas'd to appoint,
which

* *Fortuna, amica Varietati, Conftantiam refpuit* Cic. de Nat. Deor. l. 2.

which are called the Laws of Nature.

And as for the inanimate Works of God, tho' they are destitute of Life and Sense, yet in them the Foot-steps of Providence are plainly discover'd : For tho' *they have neither Speech nor Language, yet their Voices are heard among them : their Sound is gone out into all Lands, and their Words into the Ends of the World.* From all which it is evident, that there is a Being above us, that supports and governs all Things, and by his gracious Concurrence with Natural Causes, permits them to work their usual Effects, according to the Rules and Methods he has been pleased to prescribe, still reserving to himself the Power of superseding or suspending them, as He, in his infinite Wisdom, shall think proper.

Pf. 145. 16. For when the Lord openeth his Hand, he filleth all Things living with Plenteousness : But when he withdraws his Divine Influence, all the Powers of Nature are dissolved. When he looks graciously upon his Servants, then the Clouds drop Fatness, and the little Hills rejoice on every Side : But, when he hideth his Face, they are troubled ; when he taketh away their Breath, they die, and are turned again to their Dust.

Psa. lxxv. 12, 13. iv. 29.

So that nothing can subsist without the preserving Power and Influence of the Almighty ; because nothing but *that* can keep Things

Things in Being: And, consequently, at the withdrawing of it, immediately ensues the Diffolution of all Things. Which brings me to the *Second Thing* I proposed to treat of, which is,

II. That without the Assistance of this Divine Providence, whatever we take in Hand will turn to no Account.

All the Power we have being deriv'd from GOD, we can't expect it should extend further than He in his Wisdom shall think fit; nor that it will be of any Use to us, without his Blessing and Concurrence. Hence it is, that *the Race is not always to the Swift, nor the Battle to the Strong, neither yet Bread to the Wise, nor yet Riches to Men of Understanding, nor yet Favour to Men of Skill; but Time and Chance happeneth to them all.* Some unexpected Accident or other never fails to baffle the Expectations of those, who presume upon their own Sufficiency.

How many are there who flatter themselves with false Imaginations of their own Strength, and lie down in the Delusion, 'till sudden Destruction cometh upon them, like *the Morning spread upon the Mountains?* When *Goliath of Gath defied the Armies of the Living GOD, and triumphed in the Glory of his Might, a Youth prevail'd over him with a Sling, and with a Stone; and gave his Carcass unto* the

*Joel 2. 2.
1 Sam. 17.
36. 50. 46,*

the Fowls of the Air, and to the Beasts of the Field. The King of Babylon, of whom it is
 Dan. 5 19. is said, All People, Nations, and Languages,
 21. trembled and feared before him: Whom he would
 he slew, and whom he would he kept alive; whom
 he would he set up, and whom he would he put
 down; was dethroned, and driven from the Sons
 of Men, in the midst of his Glory; and had
 his Dwelling with the Beasts of the Field.

22. And Belshazzar, his Son, who knew all this,
 and had not humbled his Heart; but lifted up
 himself against the Lord; when he had impi-
 ously profaned the Vessels, that were taken out
 23. of the Temple of Jerusalem, and with his
 Lords, and his Wives, and his Concubines, had
 drunk Wine in them, and had praised the Gods
 of Silver and Gold, of Brass, Iron, Wood, and
 28. Stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know; and
 had not glorified the God in whose Hand his
 Breath was, and whose were all his Ways, was
 slain that same Night, and his Kingdom was
 given to the Medes and Persians. And 'tis
 worth our while to observe, with what Con-
 tempt and Derision he is treated in *Isaiab's*
 propheticall Description of him; where, by
 a beautiful Figure, he makes the Grave a-
 larm'd at his Coming, and the Kings that
 lay in the Dust to accost him in this man-
 ner: Art thou also become weak as we? Art
 10, 11, 12. thou become like unto us? Thy Pomp is brought
 down to the Grave, and the Noise of thy Viols:

The

The Worm is spread under thee, and the Worms cover thee. How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer! Son of the Morning! How art thou cut down to the Ground, which didst weaken the Nations!

If we think to bring any Thing to pass by our own Strength, we must have but a very imperfect Knowledge of ourselves; of the innumerable Dangers and Perplexities we are for ever liable to in this Life; and the Weakness and Infirmities entailed upon Human Nature. What is Man? Where is his Strength? What his Sufficiency? How came he into Being? or how does he continue in it? Is it by a Necessity of his own Nature? or does he depend upon some other Being? If it is by a Necessity of Nature, how is it that he consumes away like a *Moth* ^{Psa. 39. 12.} *fretting a Garment*; and slides back to his original Dust, from whence there is no Returning? Where are the Heroes of Old? Where the Renowned Conquerours? Where is *Alexander*? Where is *Cæsar*? Where are the Mighty Ones? Why do they not glory in their Conquests, and make the World tremble before them as heretofore? But alas! they are gone; they are passed by, and are no where to be found. For our *Life passeth away* ^{Wis. Sol.} *like the Trace of a Cloud. Man dieth and wa-* ^{2. 4.} *steth away; yea, Man giveth up the Ghost,* ^{Job. 14. 10.} *and where is he? As the Waters fail from*
C the

the Sea, and the Flood decayeth and drieth up, so Man lieth down, and riseth not, 'till the Heavens be no more.

If we depend upon some other Being, what a Folly is it for us to act as tho' we did not? to place our Confidence in the airy Bubbles of Pride and Self-sufficiency, and strut in Weakness and Infirmities? *Why is Earth and Ashes proud? Is it not God, who*
Psa. 104. 1. 2. is clothed with Majesty and Honour? who covereth himself with Light as with a Garment? who is the Author of Life, and Death, and all Things? without whose Order and Appointment nothing is brought to pass; neither Peace, nor War, nor Light, nor Darkness: As the Lord says by the Prophet Isai-
Isa. 45. 7. ab, I form the Light, and create Darkness: I make Peace, and create Evil: I the Lord do all these Things. What is Man then that he
Job 25. 4. 5. 6. should be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a Woman? Behold even to the Moon, and it shineth not; yea, the Stars are not pure in his Sight. How much less Man, that is a Worm; and the Son of Man, which is a Worm?

Can we procure a Drop of Rain, or a Breath of Air? Can we bid the Sick to rise and
Mat. 6. 27. walk, or stop the Hand of Death? Can we add
one Cubit to our Stature, or make one Hair of
Mat. 5. 36. our Head white or black? When all Human Succour fails us, we are forced to beg that
 God

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God would send us *Help from Trouble*: For ^{Psalm 60.}
vain is the Help of Man. What Comfort or ^{11.}
Satisfaction could we take in Life, if we did
not hope for the Favour and Assistance of
a good God? For should we depend upon
Strength and Numbers, we are told, *There is* ^{Pf. 33. 16.}
no King that can be saved by the Multitude
of an Host; neither is any Mighty Man deli-
vered by much Strength: For, at his Rebuke,
both the Chariot and Horse are fallen. If we
think that Victory is in our own Power, and
not in the Hand of God; we are assured,
that *there is no Wisdom, nor Understanding,* ^{Prov. 21.}
nor Counsel against the Lord. *The Horse is* ^{30. 31.}
prepared against the Day of Battle; but Safety
is of the Lord.

Should our Hopes be placed in Kings and
Princes; should we from thence promise our-
selves abundance of Delight, and mark out
an agreeable Prospect of future Blessings;
suddenly, when our Expectations are in full
Blossom, and every Thing serves to fix us
in the Mistake, they *die like Men*, carry a-
way our Hopes and Expectations with them,
and leave us nothing behind but this me-
lancholy Truth; that *there is no Trust to be* ^{Pf. 146. 2-}
put in Princes, nor in any Child of Man; for ^{43.}
there is no Help in them: For when the Breath of
Man goeth forth, he shall turn again to his Earth;
and then all his Thoughts perish.

Should we place our Confidence in Riches, we find they are fickle, and unconstant: When we bid Rest to our Souls, and grasp at the Possession of them, the airy Phantoms disappear; *They make themselves Wings, and flee away, as an Eagle towards Heaven:* Should we give our selves up to Honour and Grandeur, we shall find that we are in the Possession of gilded Trifles, and glaring Vanities: For *that which now is, in the Days to come shall be forgotten.*

Prov. 23. 5.
Eccles. 2. 16.

Should we delight to be wrapt in Purple, and fine Linnen, and in all the glittering Pomp of Vanity, and Ostentation; and will it not be a mortifying Reflection to think that we are but Dust? *To say to Corruption, thou art my Father, and to the Worm, thou art my Mother, and my Sister?*

Job 17. 14.

In short, do we depend upon Life, and build our Hopes upon the rotten Foundation of Ten Thousand Accidents; contrive abundance of Projects, and lay down Schemes for Ages to come? We are assured that, *Man that is born of a Woman hath but a short Time, and is full of Misery;* the next Moment may put an End to us, and our Contrivances together: *for he cometh up, and is cut down like a Flower; he fleeth as it were a Shadow, and never continueth in one Stay.*

Indeed, if we depend upon any one but God, we shall find no Security for such a Trust: for no Being can support it self, much less can it relieve or support others; And therefore

fore, without the Assistance of God, whatever we do, either by relying upon our selves or others, will turn to no Account.

III. I come now to shew, that this does not exclude human Care and Industry, but when it is considered simply by it self, without the Concurrence of God's Blessing.

Though it is certain that God governs the World, disposes of all Events, and takes a particular Care of his Creatures, without which they could not possibly subsist; yet it is likewise as certain, that he has given them Powers and Abilities, which he expects, they should make Use of, according to his Design and Appointment. For to imagine, that because all our Care and Industry, when considered by itself, without any Dependence on an over-ruling Providence, can do nothing; that it will from hence follow, that there is no need of any Care or Industry at all:— that we should live in a State of Ease and Indolence, and throw that Burthen upon God, which was appointed for ourselves:— That because we can't do *all Things*, we should therefore do *nothing*; is to act, not only against Common Sense, and the Nature of Things, but against the whole Tenour of Scripture.

I. Then let us consider the Nature of Things.— Can we expect any Thing to spring up into Order and Usefulness without Pains?

Is

Is Hunger and Thirst to be satisfied without Labour? Can a Ship sail without a Pilot? Can Houses build themselves? Can Kingdoms subsist without a Government? or Cities without a Magistrate? God has given us Powers and Abilities to provide for ourselves, which are not to be superseded or suspended but at the Expence of a Miracle; which we can hardly expect to indulge us in Sloth and Carelessness.

2. The Scripture is likewise very plain
 2 Thes. 3. 10. in this Case; and says, *If any Man does not work, neither shall he eat. The Hind of the*
 Prov. 12. 24. *Diligent (saith Solomon) shall bear Rule; but the Slothful shall be under Tribute. And a*
 Greater than Solomon tells us, That in Case of War, common Prudence will direct a Man to use his utmost Endeavours for his own Safety, and not to lose the Victory for want of Care, or too great a Presumption of Deliverance, without striving to effect it. For,
 Luke 14. 21. *what King (says our Saviour) going to make War against another King, sitteth not down first, and consulteth, whether he be able with Ten Thousand to meet him that cometh against him with Twenty Thousand?*

Has God promised us any Thing without Care and Industry? Has he any where promised us Life and Health, without making use of the Means he hath appointed for the preserving

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serving it? or Peace and Prosperity without any Endeavours of ours towards it? to provide for us against our Inclinations? or to make us happy whether we will or no? Care and Industry therefore is not discouraged, if we make a right Use of it; but such only as is founded on ourselves, and not upon God. For this is such an arrogant Piece of Idolatry, as has neither Sense, nor Reason, nor even the Shew of either, to support it.

How can it be suppos'd, that Providence will assist those, who have no Expectations but from *themselves*? How can they expect to be protected from Dangers, who trust to their own Devices, refuse the Light that God hath set up, and seek for Comfort from their own dark Inventions? *Be-Isa. 50.11. hold! all ye that kindle a Fire, says the Prophet, that compass yourselves about with Sparks: Walk in the Light of your Fire, and in the Sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of my Hand, ye shall lie down in Sorrow.*

If we doubt whether God can protect us: *We have heard with our Ears, and our Fathers Psalm have told us, what God has done in their Time^{1.2.3.4.} of Old; how he has driven out the Heathen with his Hand, and planted them in; how he has destroy'd the Nations, and cast them out. For they gat not the Land in Possession through their own Sword: neither was it their own Arm that helped them.*

But

But his Right Hand, and his Arm, and the Light of his Countenance; because he had a Favour unto them. And therefore, when the Prophet advises us to put our Trust in God, he does not do it without very good Reason; because he
Isa. 26. 4. can always help us: Trust ye in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord JEHOVA is everlasting Strength.

And the Prophet Habakkuk put so great Trust and Confidence in God, as he was resolved should make him chearful in all Circumstances: Although the Fig-tree shall not blossom, says he, neither shall Fruit be in the Vine; the Labour of the Olive shall fail, and the Fields shall yield no Meat; the Flock shall be cut off from the Fold, and there shall be no Herd in the Stalls; yet will I rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of my Salvation.
Hab. 3. 17. 18.

But as all our Endeavours will be insufficient without the Concurrence of God's Blessing, which is promised to those that put their Trust in him; so, on the other hand, whatever Trust we put in God will be insufficient without our own Endeavours.— If we depend upon ourselves entirely, we lean upon a broken Reed; and if we entirely depend upon God, without endeavouring ourselves, we shall be equally disappointed. Trust and Confidence misplaced will be Arrogance and Presumption; but if we apply it to its proper Object, it will not fail to influence

fluence our Endeavours to the Accomplishing our Hopes and Expectations.

I come now to draw some Inferences from the Whole, suitable to the present Occasion.

Since then there is a Divine Providence, that rules and governs the World, without whose Assistance every Thing we do will be in vain; but, at the same Time, which does not exclude our utmost Care and Industry; what remains, but that we strive, as much as possibly we can, to engage the Protection of God, by putting such a Trust in him as is not inconsistent with our own Endeavours? because these are Means without which it does not appear, by what God has been pleased to reveal to us hitherto, that he will prosper our Undertakings in any Thing.

We should trust in God, because it has been proved, that he only can help us: Every Thing else is upon the same Level of Dependance with ourselves. By this means we acknowledge him to be the Supream Governour, and entertain a true Sense of his excellent Perfections.

If the Success of all our Endeavours depends upon God, we should do all we could to make him our Friend. We should submit ourselves in all Conditions of Life to his good Pleasure; and patiently undergo any Affliction he shall think fit to allot us, because we are not govern'd by Chance or Necessity, but by an All-wise G O D.

We should shew our Gratitude by an hearty Thankfulness *for our Creation, Preservation, and other Blessings of this Life*, of which every one has been more or less a Partaker; and beg of God, that he would be pleased to direct us how to make a right Use of all his Mercies. We should rely upon his Protection; not only because the Scripture assures us, that he is able to defend us, but because Fact and Experience convinces us, that he always did help those that put their Trust in him. *Look at the*
Ecclus. 2. Generations of Old, and see, Did ever any trust
10. 11. in the Lord, and was confounded? or whom
did he ever despise that called upon him? For
the Lord is full of Compassion and Mercy, Long-
suffering, and very pitiful, and forgiveth Sins,
and saveth in Time of Affliction.

We ought to look upon it as the greatest Comfort imaginable, that there is a God that governs

governs the World with an even and steady Hand; that we are under the Government of one, who is able and willing to provide for us, if we are not wanting to our selves. Whereas, were we left to our own mad Conduct, liable to all the dismal Accidents, that accompany misguided Reason, and Headstrong Passions, what a miserable Life would this be? What with Want of Care on the one hand, the continual Thwarting and Opposing one another on the other hand, and the Confusion on all Sides, who would not think Life a Curse rather than a Blessing? *and praise Ecclesiastes the Dead, which are already dead, more than⁴ 2. the Living, which are yet alive?*

The Consideration of this, that we are under the Protection of the Almighty, should make us chearful and easy: *For, if God be Rom. 8.31. for us, who can be against us?* If we have secured God of our Side, what is there in this Life that shall give us the least Uneasiness? *Shall Tribulation, or Distress, or Persecution, or Famine, or Nakedness, or Peril, or Sword?* 35. *Nothing should be able to terrify us from this well-grounded Consolation, that neither Death,* 38. *nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor Things present, nor Things to come,* 39. *nor Height, nor Depth, nor any other Creature, shall be able to separate us from the Love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

The Consideration of our being under the Protection of a good God should make us throw off all anxious Concerns for the Things of this Life. For what are Dangers to him whom God will defend? What is Poverty to him who is rich in good Works? Or what are Sorrows to him, who drinks large Draughts of the inexhaustible Fountain of Bliss? What can he fear, *who has the God of Jacob for his Help?* Or what can dwell in such a Soul, but Joy, and Peace, and Happiness inexpressible?

This should likewise serve to depress in us all manner of Self-Confidence, and teach us, that when our Designs are accomplish'd, we should not arrogate the least Merit to ourselves; but ascribe all to God, who is the Fountain of Power, and *the Author of every good and perfect Gift*; and therefore *not unto us, but unto his Name, be given Glory* for all Things.

*Psalms 115.
ver. 1.*

It should also hinder us from placing Confidence in any Thing else: For there are many, either thro' Ignorance that there is a God who governs the World, or thro' Heedlessness and Want of Attention, who ascribe that to blind Fortune and Chance, in which the Hand of Providence is plainly seen; and make that which has no Understanding, nor Reason, nor even a Being in Nature, to be the

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the Cause of Things, that are produced by an Almighty Power and Wisdom. But let us not make ourselves so unworthy of the Blessings of Providence, as to ascribe them to any Thing but God, lest we cut ourselves off from any further Share in them.

For tho' we have the Happiness to live in Ease and Plenty, under a mild and gracious Government, enjoying all the Privileges that reasonable Men can expect or desire, *every Man under his own Vine, and under his own Fig-tree*; and tho' this Antient CITY in particular was never govern'd with more Carefulness and Vigilance: If to administer Justice impartially, to vindicate the Honour of Religion, and to suppress Wickedness and Vice; if these are Proofs of it: yet if we refuse to give God the Glory, by whose Assistance it is that we enjoy these Blessings, to whom the very Inclination to do good is owing, we may soon be reduced to the like dismal Circumstances, from which we are now met to commemorate our Deliverance as on this Day: When, *if the Lord himself had* Psalm 124.
not been on our Side, when Men rose up against I. 2. 3.
us, they had swallowed us up quick; when they were so wrathfully displeased at us: Yea, the Waters had drowned us, and the Stream had gone over our Soul.

For

For, a Multitude of fiery Zealots, unwilling to part with their Idolatry and Superstition, gather'd themselves into a mutinous Body, and besieged this City, in such a manner, that the Inhabitants were reduced to Famine and the utmost Extremities, till they were reliev'd by the King's Forces. How happy are we (if we know *the Things that belong to our Peace*) who enjoy our Religion unmolested, free from such a Spirit as breaths nothing but Ruin? A Spirit! that, instead of adorning the Mind with the truly Christian Ornaments of Meekness and Humility, tends only to heighthen the Passions, and make People less Christians under the Gospel than they were under the Law.

A Spirit! that teaches Men to break the Laws of God for God's sake; to depose Kings, and absolve Subjects from their Allegiance; of which King *Henry VIII.* and Queen *Elizabeth* are remarkable Instances; that makes them torture their Fellow-Creatures, for not believing against their Understandings, and the express Doctrine of the Scripture; as if People were to be convinced by Racks and Gibbets; or their Judgments were to be inform'd and rectified by taking away their Lives.

A Spirit! by which, tho' they may in vain call for Fire from above, yet they are resolved

solved to kindle it below; and do as much as possibly they can to make an Hell upon Earth. How many Examples have Men of *this Spirit* given of their inhuman Cruelties? And if we turn our Eyes to a neighbouring Country, what miserable Objects of Compassion have there been, who have so lately felt the Effects of burning Zeal and Bigottry; and have groaned under all the Torments that enthusiastick Rage, and ungovernable Fury, could inflict or think of? Were we to view them in the Agonies of Death, torn from their Families, which were left to lament away their Lives in Horror and Distracti-
on, how happy should we think ourselves to be, who sit down in the full Possession of Peace and Plenty, and the Enjoyment of a pure Religion? For which we can never be enough thankful to Almighty God, who has hitherto preserved us under the *Shadow of his Wings*; and will always continue to do so, if we use our utmost Endeavours to deserve it.—

But for our Assistance in this, and all our Undertakings, do Thou, O Lord, protect us *with the Light of thy Countenance, and further us with thy continual Help. So we that Psal. 79. 14. are thy People, and the Sheep of thy Pasture, shall give thee Thanks for ever; and will al-*
way

way be shewing forth thy Praise, from Generation to Generation.

F I N I S



